لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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SEPTEMBER 1981—TABUK 1360

EDITOR
M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD, was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious Philosopies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his fore-fathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world.

He initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement, to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the Religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter by means of His signs, to expound and dissiminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendenies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences for their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good-will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

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He passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din. After his death in 1914, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Head of the Movement. During his 52 years long leadership, he organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965 the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Mirza Nasir Ahmad as Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquires may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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The Review of Religions

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assuraunce to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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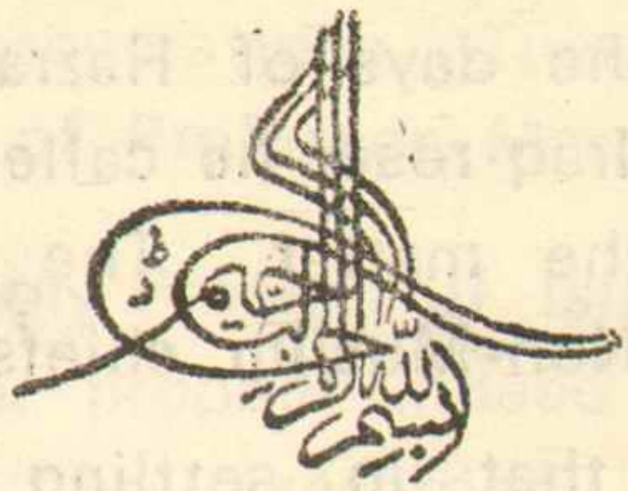

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

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RABWAH, PAKISTAN

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NOTES & COMMENTS

Islam makes no distinction between a Muslim and a non-Muslim citizen in the matter of state and government employment. The *Sahifa* or the covenant of Medina, as it is more generally known, which is the first political treaty concluded by the Holy Prophet with the non-Muslim Jews and Arab inhabitants of Medina, is a testimony to it. The covenant stipulated unity of these different communities into one nation with the Muslims, with the concept of equality of rights and obligations for each community being the basis of the agreement. Unfortunately, the Jews of Medina did not respect the agreement and soon began to flout it deliberately. This deliberate disregard on the part of the Jews eventually led to the break up of the 'One nation' or 'commonwealth' provided by the *Sahifa*.

From the very early days of the Muslim governmet all the posts of emolument and trust in the government were open to the Non-Muslim citizens equally whith their Muslim countrymen. Even as early as in the days of Khilafati Rashida

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we find the Muslim administration following this policy.

Thus when, in the days of Hazrat Umar, the question of land settlement in Iraq rose, he called a meeting in Medina to discuss and decide the matter. The meeting was attended among others by the Non-Muslim chiefs of Iran and Iraq.

Again we see that in settling the affairs of Egypt, Hazrat Umar always consulted Maquqas—the religious and spiritual leader of the Egyptians before taking any decision.

It is also worth noting that the Muslim caliphs used to invest the religious leaders of their Non-Muslim citizens with certain civil and administrative powers.

The Muslims continued to treat the Non-Muslim citizens throughout the centuries in a similar manner. The door of every office of the government was open to them and they were given a fair deal in these matters. Thus we see that under the Qmmayyads and Abbassides, the *Zimmis* were not only always consulted by the rulers but they were also appointed to the highest civil and military offices. Thus, Hazrat Amir Moavia's personal physician and court interpreter, Ibni Assal, who was a Christian, was appointed the governor of Hims by the Amir.

Mamunur Rashide, The Abbasside ruler, who has been represented as "a bitter enemy" of Christians by the Orientalists, included in his council the representatives of all communities in his kingdom, Jews, Christians, Sabaeans, and Zoroastrians.

Even as late as the days of Aurangzeb in India it is recorded that once a Muslim Officer of state objected to the appointment of two non-Muslims on the basis of the Quranic verse :

> "O ye who believe ! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends". (60 : 1)

On this application the Emperor remarked :

> "Noted the contents of your application. Let it be clear once and for all that no Parsi or Hindu government

servant can be dismissed simply because he is a non-Muslim. The verse that you have quoted in your report does not at all prove that Muslims should have nothing to do with the non-Muslims. In fact, you hav'nt quoted the verse in full, the complete verse is as follows :

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"O ye who believe ! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends, offering them love, while they disbelieve in the truth which has come to you and drive out the Messenger and yourselves from your homes merely because you believe in Allah". (60 : 1)

This shows that this verse prohibits the Muslims to have relations only with those non-Muslims who compelled the Holy Prophet to migrate from his city by infliciting all kinds of cruelties on him and with those who did their most to persecute the Muslims. But there are others who are not like them and God does not forbid the Muslims to maintain good relations with, and to be generous to, them. Thus in another verse in the same chapter as the one quoted above God says :

"Allah forbids you not, respecting those who have not fought against you on account of your religion, and who have not driven you from your homes, that you be kind to them and act equitably towards them ; surely Allah loves those who are equitable". (60 : 9)

Therefore if your interpretation of the verse, quoted by you, were true, it would have been obligatory upon us to kill all the Rajas and non-Muslim subjects of India. The fact, however, is that the verse absolutely does not mean what you say. The offices of state are open to all on the basis of ability and competence, irrespective of caste or creed. As far as religion is concerned we should follow the Divine word:

"For you your religion and for me mine". (109 : 7)

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Mrs. Sylvia A. Matheson, in her book, 'The Tigers of Baluchistan' describes her five years sojourn in the arid desert of the largest province of Pakistan. In one of her visits to attend a marriage feast in the Bugti territory, she was offered a 'strange sweet' known as Gaz-Shekal—meaning gold of the gaz tree. Writing about it she says :

> "Unable to sleep myself, I went on quizzing Mohammed and Taj and asked them to tell me more about the strange sweet I'd been given earlier that evening ; It was called gaz-shakal and remarkably like the Biblical description of the manna that fell from heaven. It looked like dark brown sugar in little clusters and tasted rather like crisp sugar too.
>
> 'Gaz shekal comes from the gaz tree, that is the tamarisk, but not from every tamarisk. Only a few special ones in Sui nullah and near Dera Bugti, Mohammed explained. After the rains, usually in November, small white blobs of swetish substance appear on the leaves of the tamarisk and are gathered by the Bugtis—the season lasts only a few days so everyone turns out to collect it and the blobs gradually turn brown with exposure to the air, getting darker the longer they are kept. In a good year the Bugtis can gather enough to last for the next twelve months and at the end of this time it looks like demerara sugar. Even as close as Sibi, only about a hundred miles away by horse, gaz shekal is unheard of. I have read one theory that the Old Testament manna was in fact the excrement of a scale insect that lived on 'tamarisk bushes in Sinai and it does seem as the Bugti's Tamarisk Gold'."

Professor D. S. Margoliouth was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England and one of the most famous orientalist of this century. He is considered to be an authority on Semitics and particularly on Islam. Much of the criticism levelled against Islam and against the Holy Founder of Islam, peace be on him, by the modern orientalists, is based on the writings of Professor Margoliouth.

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One of his close friends and perhaps the greatest historian of this century, Professor Arnold J. Toynbee, has published recollections of personalities with whom he has come accross in his distinguished career. Writing about Margoliouths he has discussed a basic trait in Professor Margoliouth's make up. The discussion is very interesting. It explains the 'reason' behind Professor Margoliouth's 'criticism' against Islam. He writes in his *'Acquaintances'* :

> "Professor Margoliouth's dominant passion was for Semitics. It was not the same kind of emotion as Mr. Rendall's passion for Italian painting. Mr. Rendall was drawn by love ; Margoliouth was drawn by a fascination that was not less strong but was compatible with simultaneous contempt and reprobation. Semitics had gripped Margoliouth at an early age. . . . He was an addict, but he was not an enthusiast. He was also a sceptical addict——a combination of contradictory attitudes which one might have thought to be psychologically impossible if one had not met in the life in Professor Margoliouth's psychic make-up.
>
> "The queer combination was examplified strinkingly in Professor Margoliouth's attitude towards Islam, the field of Semitic study to which he gave most of his attention. He once told me that he made a practice of reading through the Quran at least once a year.... he did not admire the Quran, not to speak of loving it, and he did not admire or love the Prophet Muhammad either. When he undertook to write the Pro-

phet's life for a series called the *Heroes of the Nations*, what came out was a super-Voltairean satire .....Muhammad a hero? He? He did not look like one by the time the Professor Margoliouth had put him through his mangle and wrung him out. The book evoked cries of horror.....Indeed it was so merciless that it distressed a coptic Christian contemporary of mine at Oxford, Fanous. A copt had no call to hold a brief for Islam; but the impression made by Professor Margoliouth's book on Fanous was that it was an attack, not merely on Islam, but also on everything 'oriental'."

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Elsewhere in these pages we are reproducing an article, on the Holy Prophet of Islam, by the American Scientist Dr. Michael H. Hart, taken from his book: 'The 100—A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History'. In this interesting book of brief biographical notes, Dr. Hart describes the careers of those 100 men and women who had left their impress on the world, changed the course of history and determined the fate of millions of their fellow human beings.

Giving his reason for designating the Holy Prophet of Islam as the most influential man in human history and ranking him higher than Jesus he says, in the premise of the book, it is "**because of my belief that Muhammad had a much greater personal influence on the formulation of Moslem religion than Jesus had on the formulation of the Christianity**". Describing the career of the Holy Prophet he further observes: "He was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels..... Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive."

It is gratifying to note that the Western writers have at last begin to see the light of truth and to realize the greatness of the Holy Prophet of Islam and the profound influence

he had had on the lives of millions of men and women of his own and of later generations. This, indeed, is a great progress from the days of Professor Margoliouth.

This life of the Holy Prophet of Islam is an open book. And the life of no other prophet indeed of no other person in human history is as well recorded and as accessible to study. Indeed, it is this very abundance of the recorded fact that has given the malicious critics and prejudiced writers, specially the western orientalists, their opportunity to malign and critisize the Holy Prophet. But once the criticism have been examined and objections disposed of in the light of authentic traditions, his life inspires one with admiration, faith and conviction. Obscure lives escape criticism, but they fail to produce conviction and confidence in others. But a life as rich in recorded detail as the Prophet's inspires reflection and then, faith and conviction. Such a life is bound to endear itself to every unbiased and unprejudiced person completely and for ever.

We are confident that once the veil of ignorance and prejudice is lifted and the misconceptions and false and malicious accusations against him are seen for what they are, every sane and right-thinking man will realize the grace, the majesty and the greatness of the Holy Prophet of Islam!

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Can you believe the Gospels ?

The narrators of the Gospels do not agree on any point concerning the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Here are a few example.

Mathew states that when Christ was born his parents fled to Egypt to escape the wrath of Harod, because the angel of the Lord had advised Joseph to do so. (11 : 13). Luke, describing the same event, states that they stayed where

he was born for forty one days (11 : 22). Mathew states that the annointment took place two days before the passover (24 : 2) but John states it was six days after (12 : 1) and Luke makes it much later (7 : 36). Mathew states the annointment took place in the house of Simon, the leper (26 : 6) but luke states it was the house of Lazarus (12 : 1). Marks states Christ was crucified in the Third hour (25 : 25) but John states it was after the sixth hour (21 : 14). Mathew states Christ was robed for the crucifixion in a scarlet robe (27 : 28) but John states it was a purple robe (21 : 2).

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A verse from the Holy Quran

و بشر الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصالحات ان لهم جنت تجرى من تحتها الانهار ـ كلما رزقوا منها من ثمرة رزقا قالوا هذا الذى رزقنا من قبل و اتوا به متشابها ـ ولهم فيها ازواج مطهرة وهم فيها خالدون .

Give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are provided with fruit therefrom, they will exclaim : This is what was given us before ; and similar gifts will be bestowed upon them. They will have therein mates most pure, and therein will they abide. (2 : 26)

In this verse Allah, the Exalted, has described faith as a garden beneath which rivers flow. In philosophic terms it is pointed out that righteous conduct has the same relationship with faith as running water has with a garden. As no garden can retain its freshness without water, no faith can be called living unless it is sustained and nourished with righteous conduct. If there is faith, but no deeds, the faith is barren ; and if there are deeds but no faith, the deeds are mere show. The concept of paradise in Islam is that it is a reflection of the faith held and the course of conduct pursued in this life ; it is not something alien that is bestowed from outside. Everyone's paradise is developed inside him. It is his faith and his righteous conduct, the taste of which he begins to savour in this very life. He even perceives the gardens of faith and of righteous conduct, and the streams flowing through them. In the hereafter they are

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experienced as a reality. Divine instruction teaches us that true, pure, firm and perfect faith in God, His attributes and His designs is a garden of lovely fruit-bearing trees and righteous deeds are the streams that water it. (Report of the Conference of Great Religions, pp. 135-136)

The conditions which a person experiences in the life after death are not something alien to him, they are the conditions of this life which manifest themselves with a new clarity. Whatever is the true condition of a person's belief and conduct, righteous or otherwise, in this life, is non-mainfest here, and its beneficence or its poison continues to operate on his inner self. But in the life to come all this will become manifest and nothing will remain hidden. To some degree one experiences this phenomenon in dreams One witnesses or experiences in a dream phenomena corresponding to the developments or disorders that are in course of progress in one's system. A person who is sickening for high fever sees fire or flames in his dream ; one who is heading for a cold or influenza finds himself drenched in his dream. Thus whatever the system is tending towards takes on a form in one's dream. From this experience one can form a concept of the conditions ordained by Allah for the life after death. As sleep brings about a change in our perceptions in consequence of which that which is immaterial is perceived as if it was material, a similar change in the next life will cause to be made manifest our actions and their consequences. That which we carry hidden within ourselves from this life into the next, will be observed plainly manifest in our faces in that life. As a person experiences various types of phenomena in a dream but does not suspect that they are mere personifications, and believes them to be realities, such will also be the case in the hereafter. Indeed God will make manifest in that life a new power so perfect that we could in describing it discard altogether the idea of personification, and call it a power which brings about a new creation.

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Allah has said: Of righteous ones none knows what bliss is kept hidden from them (32.19). Those bounties are described as hidden, meaning they have no counterpart in the material bounties enjoyed in this life, for these are not hidden from us. We are familiar with milk and pomegranates and grapes, etc., and enjoy them daily. It is clear, therefore, that those bounties are different from those we enjoy in this life and that the only thing common between them are the names given to them. He who conceives that the bounties of adisepar are a collection of the things of this world has not the remotest conception of the meaning of the Quran. In exposition of the verse just cited the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) has said: The bounties of paradise are such that no eye has seen them, no ear has heard of them and no mind has conceived them; while we are familiar with the bounties of this world through sight, hearing and reflection. Thus when God and His Messenger describe these bounties as belonging to a wholly different order, we would be guilty of doing violence to the spirit of the Quran if we were to assume that, for instance, the milk to be provided in paradise would be procured from herds of cows and buffaloes reared in paradise for the purpose; or that angels would be busily occupied in procuring honey from numerous beehives built among the trees and trellises of paradise which will be poured out and run in streams. Do such notions bear any relationship to the teaching which clearly expounds that the world has no conception of these things, that they illumine the spirit, foster spiritual insight and nourish the soul? They are, no doubt, described in terms applicable to material objects, but it has been made clear that they have a spiritual source which is based on truth.

It is not to be thought that the verse under comment means that on perceiving the bounties of paradise those upon whom they are bestowed will recognize them as the material bounties which they had enjoyed in this world. The verse means that those who believe and work utter righteousness shall, in the hereafter, be heirs to Gardens beneath which

rivers flow. When they perceive the fruits of those Gardens the like of which they had already enjoyed spiritually in their worldly lives, they will affirm: These are the fruits that we have already enjoyed; for they will find a resemblance between the two. Thus it would be an error to suppose that by the bounties already enjoyed are meant the material bounties available in the terrestrial existence. This would be contrary to the clear meaning of the verse and its context. Allah the Exalted has conveyed in this verse that those who believe and act righteously plant a spiritual garden, whose trees are faith and whose water is righteous conduct. They taste its fruits in this life, and shall also enjoy them in the hereafter, where their taste will be sweeter and more manifest. Having had a taste of them in their earthly existence, they will recognize them and will exclaim: These appear to be fruits that we have already enjoyed: and they will find a resemblance between the two. This verse affirms clearly that those who were nourished spiritually during their earthly existence with God's love and affection would be nourished on them manifestly in the life to come. As they would have tasted of divine love and would have had experience of it in this life, their souls would recall the times when in the darkness of the night, or in corners and in hidden places, they remembered the Divine Beloved and sought and enjoyed communion with Him. In short, there is no mention here of material fruits and nourishment.

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If it should cross anyone's mind that those gifted with spiritual insight having already tasted these bounties in their earthly existence, it should not be said that no eye had observed them, no ear had heard of them and no mind had conceived them; and that thus these two verses are mutually contradictory; the answer is that there would have been a contradiction if the bounties referred to had been worldly bounties, but it is not so. Whatever is bestowed upon a seeker through spiritual insight is a bounty of the life to come which is bestowed upon him as an earnest to whet his ap-

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petite. It needs to be remembered that a godly person is not of this world, that is why the world bears hostility towards him; he is of heaven and so heavenly bounties are bestowed upon him. A worldly person acquires worldly bounties, and a heavenly one is the recipient of heavenly bounties. Thus it is true that those bounties are kept hidden from the eyes and the ears and the minds of the worldly ones. But he who surrenders his worldly life and is given to drink of the spiritual cup, which will be tendered to him in a tangible shape in the life to come, will remember having tasted it as a spiritual experience in this life when it is presented to him in a palpable form in the life to come, It is true, however that he will conceive it as being beyond the perception of the eye and ear of the worldly. As he was in the world, though he was not of it, he too will bear witness, that the bounty was not of the bounties of the world, and that such a bounty was not perceived in the world by his eye or ear or mind. It was a foretaste of the bounties of the life to come, and was related to that life; it had no relation to this life. (Report of the Conference of Great Religions, pp. 172-175).

Worship means that the soil of the heart may be cleared of all hardness and perversions, as a cultivator clears the soil of his fields and prepares it for the sowing of crops. When the soil of the heart is cleared of all pieces of rock, and all its uneven surfaces are levelled, so that all is pure spirit, that is true worship. When a mirror is polished to that degree, it reflects back the object that is juxtaposed to it, and when a field is cleared of all obstructions, it is ready for the cultivation of all types of fruit. In the same way, if man, who has been created for worship, clears his heart of pieces of rock and levels up every depression and unevenness, and cleanses it of all opaqueness, it would reflect the image of the Divine. I affirm that the trees of divine love would grow and flourish in such a heart, and that they will bear such sweet and pure fruits as have been described as: Its fruits

are everlasting (13 : 36). This is the stage at which the efforts of the Sufis terminate. When the seeker arrives at this stage he beholds the manifestation of the glory of the Divine in all directions. His heart becomes the throne of God and God descends upon it. All stages of seeking are completed when the worship of the seeker is perfected. His heart then becomes a spiritual garden and reflects the Divine like a mirror. At this stage man experiences paradise in this world and is ready to affirm : This is what was given us before ; and similar gifts are bestowed upon them. In short, the setting in order of this condition is true worship. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VI, No. 26, 24 July 1902, p. 9).

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In the context of paradise, the Quran has mentioned first faith and then righteous conduct, and has announced as recompense therefore : Gardens beneath which rivers flow. The recompense of faith is paradise, and to keep it green and fresh the water needed is supplied by rivers which are the personification of righteous conduct. The truth is that righteous deeds performed in this life appear as running water in the life to come. We observe in this life also that as a person advances in righteous conduct and eschews disobedience and transgression, his faith is strengthened and his heart acquires greater firmness. He begins to feel an ecstasy in spiritual insight and his heart is, by the grace and bounty of Allah, filled with the love of and yearning for Allah, and his being is saturated with the delight that results therefrom and overflows with it. Divine light completely envelops his heart and chases out all darkness, narrowness and straitness. In this state no difficulty or calamity encountered in the way of Allah causes these people a moment's worry or anxiety. Indeed they become a source of delight. This is the pinnacle of faith.

There are seven degrees of faith which are acquired through effort, and there is an eighth which is a pure divine gift. In the same way there are seven gates of heaven

and an eighth which is opened by pure divine grace. It needs be remembered, therefore, that the heaven and hell of the life to come will not be anything new or alien, but are the reflection of a person's faith and conduct. They are not something bestowed or imposed from outside, but proceed from inside of a person. A believer experiences paradise in this very life, and the experienced paradise of this life becomes the promised paradise of the next life. It is a simple truth that everyone's paradise is his faith and righteous conduct, the delights of which he begins to experience in this very life. This faith and conduct are experienced as a garden and streams in the life to come. I tell you truly out of my own experience that the garden and streams are perceptible in this very life and will be experienced more realistically in the next life

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In the same way hell is the product of a person's disbelief and ill conduct. As paradise is expressed in terms of pure fruits like grapes and pomegranates, the fruits of hell is called Zaqqum As paradise will have streams and fountains like salsabil and others possessing the qualities and flavour of ginger and camphor, hell is described as having streams of boiling water and pus. Reflection shows that faith proceeds from humility and readiness to discard preconceived notions, and disbelief is generated by pride and arrogance. In the life to come arrogance will be personified as the tree Zaqqum in hell, and the evil conduct and aggressive activities that are generated by arrogance and self-esteem will be personified as boiling water and pus, which will be the portion of the dwellers in hell.

Thus as the heavenly life commences in this world, a person takes his hell also along with him from this life. Hell has been described as : Allah's kindled fire which rises over the hearts (104 : 7-8). This means that God's displeasure is the source of the fire of hell, that it is generated by sin and that it first invades the heart. This fire is composed of the griefs, sorrows and remorse that oppress the heart,

for all spiritual torment first affects the heart, as all spiritual delights originate in the heart. This is as it should be, for the heart is the source of faith and disbelief. Faith or disbelief take birth in the heart and then spread over and comprehend all the organs and the whole of the body.

Do not forget, therefore, that one carries one's heaven or hell with one from this world, but they are not like the conditions of this world; their source and origin are spiritual. In the hereafter, it is true, they will assume concrete shapes. This is a very difficult subject and most people have been misled concerning it. Failing to appreciate its essence, some have denied God, some have subscribed to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, some have devised one thing and some have devised another.

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(Al-Hakam, Vol. V, No. 42, 17 November 1901, pp. 1-2).

Give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness that they are heirs to Gardens beneath which rivers flow. In this verse, Allah, the Exalted, has characterised faith as a garden, and righteous conduct as flowing water. Righteous conduct has the same relationship to faith as flowing water has to the trees of a garden. As no garden can flourish and bring forth fruit in the absence of water, no faith can avail without righteous conduct. What is paradise? It is a personification of faith and conduct. Like hell it is nothing alien or external. It proceeds from inside a person. The delights and comforts of paradise are the pure spirit that is nurtured in this life. Pure faith is like a tree, and righteous conduct and high morals are like flowing water which keeps the tree green and flourishing. In this life one perceives this as something experienced in a dream, but in the life to come they will be experienced as concrete realities.

That is why it is written that when the dwellers of paradise experience these bounties they will exclaim: This is what was given us before; and similar gifts will be bestowed

upon them. This does not mean that we shall be given in paradise the milk, honey, grapes, pomegranates, etc., that we enjoy in this life. No, those bounties will be something altogether different in their nature and characteristics, though bearing similar names. They have been described in material terms, but we have been told that they will illumine the soul, will foster spiritual insight and that their source is the spirit and truth. To construe : what was given us before ; as meaning that they are the material bounties enjoyed in this life is an error. The meaning of this verse is that the believers who worked righteousness planted a garden, the fruit of which they who enjoy in the life to come also. As they will have tasted the fruit spiritually in this life already, they will recognize it in the next life, and will exclaim : These are fruits that we have enjoyed previously too. In fact they will be spirtual grades achieved in this life, and the enlightened ones will recognize them in the hereafter. I wish to make it clear that the philosophy underlying the concept of heaven and hell is related in the manner that I have set out. It should be remembered that worldly penalties have a disciplinary aspect by way of warning and deterrence. Discipline and mercy are co-ordinated and related, and the rewards and punishments of the life to come reflect this relationship. Human action is recorded and preserved as sound is preserved in a pnonograph. No one can derive benefit or pleasure from the contemplation of this system unless he possesses spiritual insight. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VI, No. 1, 10 January 1902, pp. 5-6).

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It is stated that the dwellers of hell will be fed on Zaqqum, and the dwellers of heaven on milk, honey and diverse kinds of fruits. What is the meaning of this ?

After referring to the bounties of heaven it is stated at one place : Whenever they are provided with fruit therefrom, they will exclaim : This is what was given us before ; and similar gifts will be bestowed upon them. Here, by : given us before ; it is not meant that they will be reminded

of the mangoes and melons and other fruits of this world, or of its milk and honey. The meaning is that sincere believers who worship God with love and zeal and experience delight through their devotion and eagerness, will recall that feeling of delight when they experience the bounties and pleasures of paradise, and will remember that they had enjoyed these delightful bounties of their Lord before this also. As heavenly life begins in this very life, the bounties of that life begin to be experienced here. But they have no relationship to the fruits enjoyed in this life, for concerning them it has been said: No eye has seen them, nor has any ear heard of them. Faith and conduct have been described in the Quran as trees; faith is a tree and conduct is flowing water provided for its nourishment. So long as the tree of faith is not nourished with the water of deeds it does not yield sweet fruits. A person enjoying heavenly life derives continuous pleasure from the remembrance of God. The unfortunate one afflicted with hellish life subsists in this life (20 : 125), which will be personified as Zaqqum on the Day of Judgement. Thus both are juxtaposed. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VII, No. 30, 17 August 1903, p. 10).

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Nothing can be achieved except through God's grace, and grace will be bestowed in the next life only upon him who is blessed with grace in this life. As God has said: He who continues blind in this life will be blind in the Hereafter (17 : 73). It is, therefore, necessary to acquire in this life the faculties needed for the heavenly life, and those faculties cannot be achieved without righteousness. No one can see God with physical eyes, but a person can see God with the eyes of righteousness. Once he becomes righteous he exclaims: I have seen God. The Quran makes mention of one aspect of this heavenly life which is bestowed upon a righteous one, where it says: whenever they are provided with fruit therefrom, they will exclaim: This is what was given us before. That is, when they will be given such of

the fruits of those trees in the life to come which had been bestowed upon them in their life upon earth they will exclaim : These are the fruits that were bestowed upon us before ; for they will find a resemblance between them. This does not mean that they will have bestowed upon them the same bounties in paradise which they had enjoyed in this life, like milk, honey. butter, pomegranates, grapes, etc., and that for the supply of these things there will be many orchards and gardeners and herds of cattle, and that trees will be laden with bee-hives for providing honey. These are all false notions. If the bounties of paradise were the same as are available in this life what would be the difference between believers and non-believers ? Idolators and non-believers all share in the enjoyment of these bounties, then how does paradise differ from this world ? The Quran and the Holy Prophet have made it clear that the bounties of paradise are such as no eye has beheld, no ear has heard of and no mind has conceived. On the other hand the bounties of this life are all seen by eyes, heard of by ears and conceived by minds. This shows that though the bounties of paradise are described in material terms, yet they are of a different nature, for otherwise what would be the meaning of : He who continues blind in this life will be blind in the Hereafter (17:73). At another place the Holy Quran says : For him who fears to stand before his Lord are two gardens (55 : 47). That is to say for him who fears his Lord and trembles in awe of His Majesty and Glory are two paradises, one in this world and one in the next. Those who efface their selves completely with true sincerity in their search after God and worship Him with single-minded devotion find an ecstasy in it and are given spiritual nourishment which illumines their souls and foster their spiritual insight.

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Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (Allah have mercy on him) has said that when a person achieves spiritual insight his Salat no longer earns any merit. This does not mean that his Salat no longer finds acceptance. It means that the delight he ex-

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periences in the Salat becomes a substitute for the merit he previousiy earned through it. If a person drinks iced and perfumed milk, can it be said that he deserves merit for drinking it? He has derived the fullest measure of delight from it. Allah's pleasure in and His acceptance of an act is one thing, and merit is another. Every expression has its own place and relevance. Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani's observation that once a person has achieved perfect spiritual insight his Salat earns no merit should be construed accordingly. He who has won through to reality is already in paradise. When a person attains to perfect communion with God all his fetters are cut asunder and all his burdens are lifted. The delight he experiences in prayer and worship is altogether different from the pleasure he derives from the satisfaction of his physical needs. A person possessing spiritual insight is very jealous of the privacy in which he holds communion with God and pours forth his soul in worship and devotion. He is anxious that no one should become aware of it. If some one should discover him in that state, while he is so occupied, he is more embrassed then one who is discovered while perpetrating a most shameful indecency. Arrived at that degree of ecstasy in worship, a person stands apart and it is the remembrance of it that w ll cause him to exclaim in paradise; I was given this before. The foundation of heavenly life is laid in this world. When a person will enter paradise he will recall the delight of such a life that he has experienced before death. This is what everyone should strive for.

(Al-Badar, Vol. II, No. 43, 16 November 1903, pp. 334-335).

The Holy Quran holds out the promise that the righteous will enter paradise after death. This is not a romantic tale, though it is couched in romentic terms. The Arabs, before the advent of Islam, had very primitive notions concerning God and spiritual values. Metaphor was resorted to in the Quran for the purpose of facilitating comprehension. For instance, it is said, The illustration of the paradise promised to the righteous

is as if, etc. (13 : 36). The Holy Prophet observed with reference to the bounties of the paradise : No eye has seen them, nor has any ear heard of them. So there will be no streams flowing with the milk and honey of this world In the same way it has been said : Give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that for them there are gardens beneath which rivers flow. At another place it is said : The case of a good word is like that of a good tree whose root is firm and everyone of those branches reaches into heaven (14 : 25). Thus it has been made clear that faith is the seed and the tree and righteous conduct is the water that nourishes it. (Al-Badar, Vol. VII, No. 25, 25 June 1908, pp. 4-5).

In this verse faith and righteous conduct are juxtaposed to each other. Faith leads to paradise and righteous conduct is flowing water that nourishes its trees. As a garden cannot last long and would be soon ruined without water, so faith is not of much avail without righteous conduct. At another place faith has been described as trees, and it is said that the faith to which Muslims are called is like trees, and righteous conduct is the water that nourishes those trees. The more one reflects over the matter, the greater is the insight that one gains. As a farmer must sow seed for cultivation of land, so a spiritual cultivator must have faith which is the seed of all spiritual progress. Then as the cultivator provides water for the irrigation of his fields or garden, in the same way righteous conduct is needed for the irrigation of the spiritual garden. Faith without righteous conduct is as futile as a garden without a source of irrigation.

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However good and of high quality the fruit trees may be, if the owner of the garden neglects to provides means of irrigation, the garden will be ruined. The same is the case with the tree of faith in spiritual life. Faith is a tree which is nourished with the spiritual water of righteous conduct. Furthermore, as every cultivator has to work and labour in addition to sowing and watering, so has Allah, the Exalted,

ordained spiritual exercises for the achievement of spiritual grace and blessings.

(Al-Hakam, Vol. VII, No. 41, 14 July 1908, p. 5)

The Holy Quran inculcates righteous conduct alongwith faith. Righteous action predicates complete absence of even a suspicion of taint of any kind. All human action is vulnerable to some type of canker, for instance, the desire to show off, vanity, exultation, etc. Then there is the risk that good actions may be rendered vain by various types of ill conduct. Righteous action is that which is entirely divorced from the least injustice, vanity, show, pride or invasion of another person's rights. Righteous conduct is a safeguard both in this life and in the next. If there is one member of a household who adheres to righteous conduct his example may serve to safeguard all others against evil. Mere belief, without righteous conduct, however, is of no avail.

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(A -Badar, Vol. I, No 9, 26 December 1902, p. 66)

Keep well in mind that unless all conduct is sincere and proceeds from a spiritual motive, it is of no avail. An action is righteous only when it is not tainted by the least wrong. The opposite of right is wrong. Righteous is that which is entirely free from wrong. Even the Salat which is vitiated by selfish motives is not for the sake of Allah, and is vain for it is empty of sincerity and spiritual content.

(Al-Hakam, Vol. VIII, No. 1, 10 January 1904, p. 2)

Righteous conduct does not so become by our determination. Righteous action is that which is not tainted by the least wrong ; for right is the opposite of wrong. Food is pure if it is neither ill-cooked, nor burnt, nor prepared from defective ingredients, but is such as can easily be assimilated by the system. In the same way, righteous action should be free of all defaults ; that is to say, it should be in accord with divine command and the practice of the Holy Prophet, and should not be vitiated by the least slackness,

vanity, show or self-assertion. Only such action is righteous. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VIII, No. 14, 30 April 1904 and No. 15, 10 May 1904, p. 1).

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The Holy Quran repeatedly affirms that the dwellers of paradise will abide therein for ever. They will have therein mates most pure, and therein will they abide (2 : 26). Those who believe and act righteously are the dwellers of the Garden, therein shall they abide (2 : 83). There are many other verses to the same effect.

(Izalah Auham, Part I, pp. 353-354)

Salvation in the hereafter is not attainable without righteous conduct in this life, and righteous conduct demands self-discipline and effort. It is Allah's way that He grants strength for the achievement of that concerning which one makes a strong determination. So one ought to address oneself to action with a strong determination and binding resolve. (Letters, Vol. V, p. 60, Letter No. 16, addressed to Hazrat Munshi Zafar Ahmad Sahib).

The mention of streams of milk and honey in connection with paradise does not mean that there will be a herd of cows in paradise with a number of cowboys who will milk the cow and pour the milk into streams, or that there will be clusters of beehives and their honey will be collected and poured into streams. Allah has instructed me otherwise. If the fruits of paradise will be the melons, watermelons, pomegranates, etc., to which we are accustomed here, then what will be the difference between believers and non-believers? The non-believers can say : We eat them here, you will eat them hereafter. The Holy Quran says : Give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that for them there are gardens beneath which rivers flow. In this verse Allah, the exalted, has characterised faith as a garden beneath which rivers flow. Allah has set forth that righteous conduct has the same relationship to faith as flowing water has to a

garden. As no garden or tree can flourish without water, so faith cannot survive and keep its strength without the support of righteous conduct If there is faith and no righteous conduct, vain is the faith. If there is good conduct and no faith, the conduct is mere show. Thus the paradise presented by the Quran is a reflection of the faith held and the conduct pursued in this life. Everyone's paradise begins with his faith and conduct, and its delight begins to be perceived in this very life. The garden of faith and the streams of righteous action begin to be visible to the inner sight in this life. In the hereafter the garden will be manifested openly, and its external reality will become visible. The Quran clearly indicates that faith is watered with righteous conduct, without which it withers away.

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Two matters are affirmed here. One, that paradise is a garden, and two, that its trees are watered by streams. Study the Quran from beginning to end carefully. You will then grasp the reality. We are not here concerned with metaphor, but with reality. The God who has brought man into existence from a state of no existence, and Who has power of new creation, will certainly personify a man's faith in the shape of trees, and personify his action in the shape of running water, and they will become externally visible. An illustration might make this comprehensible. A person eats nice sweet fruit in a dream and drinks cool, agreeable water, and finds both truly pleasant and does not doubt their reality. He feels filled with the fruit and his thirst is quenched by the water, but when he wakes up there is no fruit and no water. As Allah, the Exalted, invests these things with an existence in a dream, He will personify faith and righteous conduct in the hereafter. This is the meaning of: This is what was given us before; and similar gifts will be bestowed upon them. This cannot be construed as meaning that when the dwellers of paradise eat the fruits thereof they will exclaim: These are the fruits, the melons, the watermelons, or pomegranates

that we had eaten in our life upon earth ; for this would be no praise of their delicious taste, and will also be a lack of appreciation of the bounties of paradise. For instance, if a person were to visit the valley of Kashmir and on eating its pears should exclaim :, These are the same pears that I ate in the plains ; this would be a contempt of the pears of Kashmir. If the bounties of paradise are of a similar type, this is no matter for joy, but a reason for dislike. Therefore, this is not the meaning of the verse. Its correct meaning is that when the dwellers of paradise, who were sincere worshippers and men of piety in their life upon earth, will enjoy the personifications of their faith and righteous deeds in paradise they will recall the spiritual delight they had experienced in their faith and the pleasure they derived from their spiritual exercises and their righteous deeds in their earthly existence and they will exclaim : This is what was given us before.

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The more a person reflects over the Quran the more he will realize that he will enjoy these delights more intensely in his delight in love for the divine. The connotation of delight is a thousand times more intense in the case of spiritual delights than it is in case of physical delights. Were it not that there is far greater intensity in the satisfaction to be derived from spiritual love than is the case with physical love, why should lovers of the divine abandon the latter in favour of the former ? There were some, like Ibrahim Adham, who gave up kingdoms for the sake of divine love. The Prophets (on all of them be peace) cheerfuly bore untold misfortunes. If it was not the delight and yearning inspired by divine love which drove them irresistibly then what was it that made them endure such tribulations ?

As the Holy Prophet was ahead of everyone else in this respect, his example is also most outstanding. The Quraish of Mecca, being steeped in worldly values and unable to see beyond their mortal and unreal delights, imagin-

ing that the Holy Prophet's preaching was prompted by worldly motives, offered him all worldly bounties and honours, wealth and riches, women and kingdom, so only that he should desist from condemning their idols and preaching the unity of God. But he rejected all that they offered and announced that if they were to place the sun on his right and the moon on his left, he would not abandon his purpose. Then they subjected him to persecution of a type and intensity which has no parallel. He accepted and endured all steadfastly and cheerfully, but did not swerve in the least from his course. If there was no delight or yearning that drove him on, why did he choose to endure all these miseries and misfortunes? Indeed, there was the intense delight of the love of God which has no like or equal.

The delights of paradise possess another excellence which is lacking in worldly and physical delights. For instance, when a person eats he forgets all other pleasures. But the pleasures of paradise will delight body and soul; they will combine both. Yet they will have no impurity or opacity. The greatest of all will be the vision of the Divine. It is necessary, however, that one who desires to behold the glory of the Divine should prepare himself for such vision in this life. He should take with him the eyes that can endure that refulgance. He who has not made preparations for it here will not be granted it in the hereafter. (Al-Hakam, Vol. IX, No. 35, 10 October 1905, pp. 9-10)

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MUHAMMAD

(570 - 632)

By Michael H. Hart

My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels.

Of humble origins, Muhammad founded and promulgated one of the world's great religions, and became an immensely effective political leader. Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive.

The majority of the persons in this book had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured or politically pivotal nations. Muhammad, however, was born in the year 570, in the city of Mecca, in southern Arabia, at that time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of trade, art, and learning. Orphaned at age six, he was reared in modest surroundings. Islamic tradition tells us that he was illiterate. His economic position improved when, at age twenty-five, he married a wealthy widow. Nevertheless, as he approached forty, there was little outward indication that he was a remarkable person.

Most Arabs at that time were pagans, who believed in many gods. There were, however, in Mecca, a small number of Jews and Christians; it was from them no doubt that Muhammad first learned of a single, omnipotent God who ruled the entire universe. When he was forty years old, Muhammad became convinced that this one true God (Allah)

was speaking to him, and had chosen him to spread the true faith.

For three years, Muhammad preached only to close friends and associates. Then, about 613, he began preaching in public. As he slowly gained converts, the Meccan authorities came to consider him a dangerous nuisance. In 622, fearing for his safety, Muhammad fled to Medina (a city some 200 miles north of Mecca), where he had been offered a position of considerable political power.

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This flight, called the Hegira, was the turning point of the Prophet's life. In Mecca, he had had few followers. In Medina, he had many more, and he soon acquired an influence that made him a virtual dictator. During the next few years, while Muhammad's following grew rapidly, a series of battles were fought between Medina and Mecca. This war ended in 630 with Muhammad's triumphant return to Mecca as conqueror. The remaining two and one-half years of his life witnessed the rapid conversion of the Arab tribes to the new religion. When Muhammad died, in 632, he was the effective ruler of all of southern Arabia.

The Bedouin tribesmen of Arabia had a reputation as fierce warriors. But their number was small; and plagued by disunity and internecine warfare, they had been no match for the larger armies of the kingdoms in the settled agricultural areas to the north. However, unified by Muhammad for the first time in history, and inspired by their fervent belief in the one true God, these small Arab armies now embarked upon one of the most astonishing series of conquests in human history. To the northeast of Arabia lay the large Neo-Persian Empire of the Sassanids; to the northwest lay the Byzantine, or Eastern Roman Empire, centered in Constantinople. Numerically, the Arabs were no match for their opponents. On the field of battle, though, the inspired Arabs rapidly conquered all of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine. By 642, Egypt had been wrested from the Byzantine Empire, while the

Persian armies had been crushed at the key battles of Qadisiya in 637, and Nehavend in 642.

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But even these enormous conquests—which were made under the leadership of Muhammad's close friends and immediate successors, Abu Bakr and 'Umar ibn al-Khattab—did not mark the end of the Arab advance. By 711, the Arab armies had swept completely across North Africa to the Atlantic Ocean. There they turned north and, crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, overwhelmed the Visigothic kingdom in Spain.

For a while, it must have seemed that the Moslems would overwhelm all of Christian Europe. However, in 732, at the famous Battle of Tours, a Moslem army, which had advanced into the center of France, was at last defeated by the Franks. Nevertheless, in a scant century of fighting, these Bedouin tribesmen, inspired by the word of the Prophet, had carved out an empire stretching from the borders of India to the Atlantic Ocean—the largest empire that the world had yet seen. And everywhere that the armies conquered, large-scale conversion to the new faith eventually followed.

Now, not all of these conquests proved permanent. The Persians, though they have remained faithful to the religion of the Prophet, have since regained their independence from the Arabs. And in Spain, more than seven countries of warfare finally resulted in the Christians reconquering the entire peninsula. However, Mesopotamia and Egypt, the two cradles of ancient civilization, have remained Arab, as has the entire coast of North Africa. The new religion, of course, continued to spread, in the intervening centuries, far beyond the borders of the original Moslem conquests. Currently, it has tens of millions of adherents in Africa and Central Asia, and even more in Pakistan and northern India, and in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the new faith has been a unifying factor. In the Indian subcontinent, however, the conflict between Moslems and Hindus is still a major-obstacle to unity.

How, then, is one to assess the overall impact of

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Muhammad on human history? Like all religions, Islam exerts an enormous influence upon the lives of its followers. It is for this reason that the founders of the world's great religions all figure prominently in this book. Since there are roughly twice as many Christians as Moslems in the world, it may initially seem strange that Muhammad has been ranked higher than Jesus. There are two principal reasons for that decision. First, Muhammad played a far more important role in the development of Islam than Jesus did in the develoment of Christianity. Although Jesus was responsible for the main ethical and moral precepts of Christianity (insofar as these differed from Judaism), St. Paul was the main developer of Christian theology, its principal proselytizer, and the author of a large portion of the New Testament.

Muhammad, however, was responsible for both the theology of Islam and its main ethical and moral principles. In addition, he played the key role in proselytizing the new faith, and in establishing the religious paractices of Islam. Moreover, he is the author of the Moslem holy scriptures, the Koran, a collection of certain of Muhammad's insights that he believed had been directly revealed to him by Allah. Most of these utterances were copied more or less faithfully during Muhammad's lifetime and were collected together in authoritative form not long after his death. The Koran, therefore, closely represents Muhammad's ideas and teachings and to a considerable extent his exact words. No such detailed compilation of the teachings of Christ has survived. Since the Koran is at least as important to Moslems as the Bible is to Christians, the influence of Muhammad through the medium of the Koran has been enormous. It is probable that the relative influence of Muhammad on Islam has been larger than the combined influence of Jesus Christ and St. Paul on Christianity. On the purely religious level, then, it seems likely that Muhammad has been as influential in human history as Jesus.

Furthermore, Muhammad (unlike Jesus) was a secular as well as a religious leader. In fact, as the driving force behind the Arab conquests, he may well rank as the most influential political leader of all time.

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Of many important historical events, one might say that they were inevitable and would have occurred even without the particular political leader who guided them. For example, the South American colonies would probably have won their independence from Spain even if Simon Bolivar had never lived. But this cannot be said of the Arab conquests. Nothing similar had occurred before Muhammad, and there is no reason to believe that the conquests would have been achieved without him. The only comparable conquests in human history are those of the Mongols in the thirteenth century, which were primarily due to the influence of Genghis Khan. These conquests, hower, though more extensive than those of the Arabs, did not prove permanent, and today the only areas occupied by the Mongols are those that they held prior to the time of Genghis Khan.

It is far different with the conquests of the Arabs. From Iraq to Morocco, there extends a whole chain of Arab nations united not merely by their faith in Islam, but also by their Arabic language, history, and culture. The centrality of the Koran in the Moslem religion and the fact that it is written in Arabic have probably prevented the Arab language from breaking up into mutually unintelligible dialects, which might otherwise have occurred in the intervening thirteen centuries. Differences and divisions between these Arab states exist, of course, and they are considerable, but the partial disunity should not blind us to the important elements of unity that have continued to exist. For instance, neither Iran nor Indonesia, both oil-producing states and both Islamic in religion, joined in the oil embargo of the winter of 1973- 4. It is no coincidence that all of the Arab states, and only the Arab states, participated in the embargo.

We see, then, that the Arab conquests of the seventh century have continued to play an important role in human history, down to the present day. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.

From the Book :
' The 100—A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History '.

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